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TAGS: PREL PHUM LH BY
SUBJECT: LITHUANIA SUPPORTS DOUBLE ROLLOVER FOR BELARUS
SANCTIONS

REF: SECSTATE 112644

Classified By: Pol/Econ Chief JMFinkbeiner for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

(C) We delivered reftel talking points regarding the EU's sanction policy for Belarus to MFA's Deputy Director of the Eastern Neighborhood Department Marijus Gudynas on November 19. Gudynas shared a copy of the EU Draft Council Conclusions on Belarus dated November 11 (sent via email to EUR/UMB, EUR/ERA and EUR/NB). The proposal, which was circulated by the Swedish Presidency, calls for a double rollover of both the mandate for the sanctions and the suspension of the sanctions until October 2010. We expressed our support for the double rollover approach and suggested that the EU would maintain greater leverage if the expiration dates for the mandate and for the suspension of sanctions respectively were staggered. Gudynas said that the Lithuanian Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee is in favor of the double rollover approach but did not specify a preference on the timing of expiration dates. According to Gudynas this leaves the GOL "rather flexible" on the issue of timing. He indicated that the GOL, taking our suggestions into account, would likely support the UK proposal to stagger the timing of expiration dates. He revealed that Germany, France and Latvia want to end the sanctions on Belarus altogether. Gudynas suspects that the positions of Germany and Latvia are motivated by business interests in Belarus.

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